

# UARTS VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION: POSITION PROFILE

MAY | 2023





University of the Arts is dedicated to advancing human creativity in an increasingly complex and technology-driven world. We believe creativity is the true catalyst for social and economic change and the most essential skill for success in today's society. We deliver a diverse curriculum, grounded in critical inquiry and creative practice, which enables students to both explore and transcend different artistic disciplines. We are committed to being the place of choice for thinkers, doers and dreamers—a constantly evolving University devoted to the art and science of creativity for a better world."



# The Position

University of the Arts (UArts) seeks a collaborative, innovative, student-centered, and business-minded leader to serve as its next Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPF&A). A strategic partner with the president, the Board of Trustees, the chief academic officer and members of the leadership team, the VPF&A has overall responsibility for the management, leadership, guidance, and direction of the financial and administrative services of the University. Managing a broad portfolio of finance and operations functions, the VPF&A will build a culture of trust and transparency in the business office and embed a customer service approach in working with stakeholders across the University. The ideal candidate will possess 7–10 years of progressively responsible and relevant leadership in administration, finance, and operations in a higher education setting. A master's degree in business administration, finance, accounting, or a related field from an accredited institution is required. A true connection to UArts' mission and a demonstrated interest in and openness to the arts will be equally important.

UArts' mission—to advance human creativity—is rooted in the belief that creativity is the most essential skill for success in an ever-changing world. With roots in arts education that stretch back more than 145 years in Philadelphia, UArts offers a comprehensive slate of programs spanning design, visual arts, film, music, dance, theater, museum studies, and writing. The new VPF&A will join UArts under new presidential leadership and enjoy close collaboration with the president **Kerry Walk will begin as the fifth president in August 2023**), the Board of Trustees, and other campus leaders.

# About UArts

## The University & its History

UArts is the only University in the country dedicated solely to the visual and performing arts, design, and writing. The University is informed by a rich institutional history. In 1987, UArts was created by the merger of two institutions, Philadelphia College of Art and the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts.

Philadelphia College of Art was established in 1876 as part of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. As the school expanded programmatically, it became the standalone Philadelphia College of Art.

The performing arts programs date back to 1870, when graduates of Germany's Leipzig Conservatory opened the Philadelphia Musical Academy, one of the first European-style conservatories of music in

America. Over the years, this academy grew to become a college of music, and became the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts after adding schools of dance and theater. Uniting Philadelphia College of Art and Philadelphia College of Performing Arts into one University led to a richer campus culture and deepened our ability to think, create, and explore across disciplines as we prepare students for careers as visual and performing artists.



Students on the steps of  
Dorrance Hamilton Hall (1970)  
Courtesy of University Libraries



## Academics

UArts offers a flexible, rich curriculum to approximately 1,400 degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate students. Graduates emerge with deep practical expertise, a critical understanding of their discipline, and the professional know-how to apply their talents across a wide array of careers.



## Finances

The University's FY22 budget was **\$52.7 million**. It operates on a tuition-driven budget model and uses a zero-based yearly budgeting process. Full-time tuition is **\$48,250**, with an average on-campus housing charge of **\$11,380**. UArts awards more than **\$32 million** in financial aid annually. Individual academic programs may award merit-based scholarships, as well.

In 2018, the University launched Uniquely UArts: The Campaign for Creative Capital. The campaign exceeded its **\$50 million** goal, raising more than **\$67 million** for scholarships, student and faculty research and exploration, capital projects, and the UArts Cares Fund, the latter of which provides equitable access to critical student needs like technology, class supplies, healthcare, and transportation. Transformative capital projects include the creation of a new student center, a high-tech makerspace, state-of-the-art recording studios, the Center for Immersive Media, and new facilities for many academic programs. Renovations to student residence halls will commence in the coming years. UArts has an endowment of **\$65 million**.

The University is currently negotiating with two newly formed bargaining units: the faculty voted to unionize in November of 2020, and the staff voted to unionize in May 2022. Negotiations toward the first bargaining agreement for each group are in progress.







# Opportunities & Expectations for Leadership

## Foster a Culture of Trust, Collaboration, & Transparency

With strong interpersonal skills and full alignment with UArts’ mission, the VPF&A will set the tone for collaborative working relationships among the different departments in the business office while building strong and productive relationships with stakeholders across the University. Effective, transparent, and frequent communications will be at the core of the VPF&A’s leadership style and approach with members of the finance and administration team and all members of the UArts community.

## Leadership for the Finance & Administration Team

In leading the finance and administration team, the VPF&A will collaborate to assess and review current processes and procedures to enhance efficiencies within the administrative units, all with

a customer service lens. They will drive process improvement through effective change management methodologies to create a culture of greater transparency and a customer service focus. They will also review the current structure of the office and make recommendations for change to achieve efficiencies.

The VPFA/CFO provides leadership to a broad portfolio of administrative units. Direct reports include:

- **AVP for Financial Services/Controller**
- **AVP for Human Resources**
- **AVP for Facilities and Operations**
- **AVP for Information Technology**
- **General Manager of Dining Services (outsourced)**
- **Director for Campus Events and Scheduling**
- **Director for Retail Operations and Procurement**
- **Chief Investment Officer (outsourced)**
- **General Counsel (outsourced)**
- **Senior Executive Assistant**





## Strategic Resource Management Partner

The VPF&A will be a strategic resource management partner to the president, the Board of Trustees, and the chief academic officer, as well as other leadership team members as appropriate. They will devise innovative, forward-looking ways to leverage University resources. This will include providing oversight for the annual budget process and projections that account for future growth, program development, and other revenue opportunities across the University. The VPF&A must work aggressively toward securing and strengthening the University's fiscal health and building a stable and strong immediate and long-term financial plan.

## Communication

Keeping in mind the University's mission of serving students, the new VP will develop a communication plan with their team and community input that will lend greater transparency to budgeting and forecasting. The next VP will inform stakeholders of efficiencies and benefits to the University at large, as well as to departments and units, by translating and sharing complex financial information and business concepts. They will ensure timeliness and responsiveness to incoming queries and requests from the UArts community.

## Facilities Management

Responsible for the management of 1 million square feet in Center City Philadelphia, the VPF&A will further establish priorities, timelines, and financing to meet current and future facilities needs. They will devise support for creative ways to provide resources for spaces on the campus with sustainable action plans, taking advantage of existing and new partnerships as appropriate.

## Strategic Human Resources

Understanding the people pressures of the pandemic years, they will ensure that the HR department establishes and maintains a close, collaborative partnership with the campus community on salient human capital issues including labor relations, talent management, recruitment, retention, training and development, succession planning, compensation alignment, equitable pay, University-wide compensation and benefits plans, and flexible work.

## Technology Planning

The VPF&A will work closely with the AVP for Information Technology and others on priorities, timelines, and financing to meet the UArts community's evolving needs. They will ensure the necessary investment in technology for instruction, security, administration, and infrastructure to serve a vibrant, dynamic, and diverse community.



UArts School of Dance majors performing at the annual Midtown Village Fall Festival



UArts Queer, Trans & Non-Binary Club booth at 2022 Orientation



# Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility (DEIA)

The next VPF&A must be passionate about DEIA and committed to the UArts definition of DEIA, which ensures a commitment to accessibility and recognizes that a neurodiverse community of learners enhances academic culture and strengthens UArts' strategic mission.



## Essential Duties & Responsibilities

- Leadership, direction, oversight, and functional responsibility for accounting, finance, budget, human resources, employee benefits, risk management, legal affairs, information technology, facilities operations and planning, construction/renovation, housekeeping, distribution (mail) services, facilities rentals, public safety, University store, purchasing, dining services, leasing and management of University-owned real estate, and labor relations, and is UArts' chief investment officer.
- Primary liaison to four Board of Trustees committees: Finance, Buildings and Grounds, Investment, and Audit, and attend all meetings of the full Board of Trustees, Executive, Academic Affairs and Student Life, and Advancement Committees.
- Member of the Senior Staff, charged with contributing to the University's strategic planning to ensure appropriate allocation of resources in support of the University's mission and priorities.
- Responsible for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of college-wide functions, processes, and practices to ensure fiduciary and fiscal compliance.
- Fostering a best practices approach across all functional areas.
- Preparing long-range operating and capital budget forecasts for the University to provide a framework for decision-making and to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Administration, coordination, development, and implementation of policies, procedures, systems, and budgets.
- Development, negotiation, execution, and monitoring of vendor and various service contracts.
- Motivating and leading a high-performance management team.
- Mentoring direct reports to cultivate skills and to increase consciousness of the interrelationship among the departments within the VPF&A portfolio.
- Promoting a culture of high performance and continuous improvement that is in alignment with the University's mission and values while providing a commitment to quality to the campus community.
- Establishing and maintaining relationships with members of the Board of Trustees, staff, faculty, and external stakeholders.
- Maintaining professional development to ensure knowledge of current practices and trends for like positions.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by the incumbent; they do not purport to describe all functions. The incumbent may be assigned other duties, and the essential functions may change from time to time as necessary.



# Knowledge, Skills, & Abilities

- Exceptional degree of emotional intelligence.
- Maintains the highest level of confidentiality and discretion.
- Knowledge of best practices in fiscal resources, human resources, information technology, and operations.
- Excellent leadership abilities and the judgment and confidence to successfully make and implement decisions.
- A strategist who can operationalize, inspire trust, and promote transparency.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills with all stakeholders.
- Demonstrates a collaborative, inclusive, and collegial leadership style, political savvy, and the personality necessary to establish credibility, to motivate people and to command respect both within and external to the University.
- Ability to develop both short-term and long-term plans for the areas under direct supervision to successfully align with the University's goals and objectives.
- Ability to think and act strategically.



# Minimum Qualifications

- Master's degree in Business Administration, Finance, Accounting, or a related field from an accredited institution.
- 7–10 years of progressively responsible and relevant leadership in administration, finance, and operations.
- A proven track record of accomplishment and collaboration in the strategic management and improvement of institutional operations and functions that maximize efficiency and effectiveness across relevant administrative areas.
- Experience in facilitating progressive organizational change and development within a higher education setting.
- Experience in implementing and managing change in a complex institutional setting, including experience in re-engineering and/or redesigning administrative processes and operations.
- Proven expertise in one or more of the following areas: human resources, facilities management, business services, business enterprises fiscal management, regulatory compliance, and/or fiscal management.
- Interest in/openness to the arts/creativity as the core focus of the institution.

# Preferred Qualifications

- 15 years of experience in a senior management position or a professional administrative position in a college or University.
- Earned doctorate in a field related to the responsibilities described in this position description.



# Nomination & Application Process

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications in July and will continue until the position is filled. For best consideration, applicant materials should be received by July 7, 2023.

## Candidates should provide:

- Letter of interest stating how the candidate’s experiences and qualifications connect with the required/preferred characteristics and priorities expressed in the position profile.
- Resume or curriculum vitae.
- Statement of contribution to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Five professional references with emails, telephone numbers, and a description of the candidate’s professional relationship with each reference listed. (References will not be contacted without prior written authorization from the applicant.)
- Application and nominations should be sent electronically (PDF or MS Word) to: **uartsvpfa@agbsearch.com**.

## The search is being assisted by the following professionals from AGB Search:

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# University of the Arts is an equal opportunity employer

**Title IX statement: University of the Arts prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in its programs and activities, including admission and employment, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The director for Title IX, equity, and compliance is responsible for overseeing compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws and regulations. To contact the director for Title IX, equity, and compliance, email [titleix@uarts.edu](mailto:titleix@uarts.edu), visit University of the Arts, 320 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102, or call 215-717-6362. To learn more about the University’s Title IX policy and response to sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, visit [uarts.edu/titleix](https://uarts.edu/titleix). Inquiries may also be directed to the Federal agency responsible for enforcing Title IX, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.**

**In compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, University of the Arts publishes its Annual Safety Report at the following link:**

**[uarts.edu/about/campus-crime-fire-reports](https://uarts.edu/about/campus-crime-fire-reports)**



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[uarts.edu](http://uarts.edu)



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